

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 DOTE-00
EB-08 INR-07 NSAE-00 CIEP-00 FAA-00 PM-04 H-01 L-03
NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01 ACDA-07
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4107
AMEMBASSY BONN
INFO AEMBASSY BERLIN UNN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY BERN
USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T A I L SECTION 1 OF 2 USBERLIN 0577

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: EAIR, PFOR, PGOV, WB, GW, GE
SUBJECT: INTERFLUG OVERFLIGHTS OF THE FRG

REF: (A) BONN 824, (B) BONN 3115, (C) USBER 465, (D) USBER 497

1. SUMMARY: WE THINK TEGEL IS GRADUALLY IMPROVING ITS
INTERNATIONAL STANDING DESPITE BERLIN'S FAILURE SINCE 1972
TO IMPLEMENT THE LUFTKREUZ CONCEPT. WE FIND THAT BOTH
COUNTERPROPOSALS ON FRG SIDE OF PROPOSED BARGAIN FOR INTER-
FLUG OVERLIGHT RIGHTS HAVE DISADVANTAGES: (1) WE SHARE
APPREHENSIONS OF EMBASSY THAT LUFTHANSA SERVICE COULD BE
A FIRST STEP IN A CAMPAIGN TO DEMONSTRATE THAT THE CORRIDOR
REGIME IS NO LONGER NECESSARY. (2) WE ALSO THINK THAT
ASKING GDR PERMISSION FOR MERCY FLIGHT OVERFLIGHTS WOULD
DETRACT FROM SAME SERVICE THAT ALLIED CARRIERS CAN ALREADY
PERFORM THROUGH THE CORRIDORS. WE RECOMMEND THAT BONN
GROUP REVIEW IMPLICATIONS OF FRG PROPOSALS IN DEPTH.

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END SUMMARY.

2. WE READ GEHLOFF'S ARGUMENT THAT "BALL IS IN GDR
COURT" AT THE QUADRIPARTITE AMBASSADORIAL LUNCH (REF B)
AS EVIDENCE THAT THE GDR HAS ALREADY BEEN APPROACHED ON
A LUFTHANSA (LH) STOP AT TEGEL. WE SHARE HIS VIEWS ABOUT
THE IMPORTANCE OF SECURING WEST BERLIN'S POSITION AS A

CENTER OF INTERNATIONAL AVIATION. HOWEVER, IN STRESSING THIS OBJECTIVE, AS WELL AS THE FRG'S PROPOSAL MEANS TO ACHIEVE IT -- LH AND NON-THREE POWER FLIGHTS -- GEHLHOFF HAS PARAPHRASED FROM THE 1972 BONN GROUP AIR STUDY, CENTRAL PURPOSE OF WHICH WAS TO ADVANCE THE LUFTKREUZ CONCEPT FOR WEST BERLIN. ALAS, THE LUFTKRUEZ IDEA IS NOW DEAD. MEANWHILE, SCHOENEFELD HAS ATTRACTED SOME ADDITIONAL WESTERN CARRIERS (THY, SAS, KLM, AUA). NEVERTHELESS, TEGEL HAS ALSO DONE WELL. INTERNATIONAL TRAFFIC, PRIMARILY CHARTERS FOR VACATION-BOUND BERLINERS, HAS GROWN 20 PERCENT. THERE WERE OVER 7780 SUCH FLIGHTS LAST YEAR CARRYING 890,747 PASSENGERS, AN INCREASE FROM 6254 AND 570,721 IN 1972. ALSO, THE SCHEDULED ZURICH SERVICE WILL BE ADDED ON APRIL 1 TO THE EXISTING DIRECT SCHEDULED INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS TO PARIS AND LONDON. WE NOTE THAT BY CONTRAST, THE CITY HAS FEW INBOUND VACATION CHARTER FLIGHTS. WE THINK THE SENAT AND THE LOCAL TRAVEL INDUSTRY MIGHT DO MORE IN THIS REGARD, A POINT WHICH COULD BE CONSIDERED IN THE STUDY OF BERLIN VIABILITY.

3. A LUFTHANSA SERVICE FROM TEGEL TO AND FROM MOSCOW, PARTICULARLY ONE CARRYING BERLIN PASSENGERS, WOULD ENHANCE TEGEL'S INTERNATIONAL IMAGE, AND WOULD BE GREETED BY BERLINERS WITH CONSIDERABLE ENTHUSIASM A NEW LINK TO THE FRG (EVEN ONE NOT CARRYING BERLIN PASSENGERS) WOULD BE WELCOMED ALTHOUGH OUR GUESS IS THAT THIS ASPECT OF THE NEW SERVICE WOULD PROVE MUCH LESS IMPORTANT THAN THE SENTIMENTAL ELEMENT OF SEEING LUFTHANSA, PLANES BACK IN BERLIN, WHOSE WELL KNOWN ROLE IN

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AVIATION HISTORY NEEDS NO ELABORATION. HOWEVER, SUCH INITIAL EXUBERANCE COULD PROVE DOUBLE-EDGED. WE ADMIT TO SOME CONDERN (ALREADY NOTED YB EMBASSY BONN, REF A) THAT THE APPEARANCE OF LH AIRCRAFT IN BERLIN WOULD LEAD ALL TOO QUICKLY TO PRESSURE FOR PASSENGER SERVICES, NOT MERE "TECHNICAL STOP," AND NOT EVERYONE CLOAMORING FOR SUCH SERVICES WILL BEAR IN MIND THAT WEST BERLIN STILL EXISTS BECAUSE OF THE CORRIDORS QUADRIPARTITELY AGREED IN ANOTHER DAY AND AGE.

4. SPECIFICALLY, WE FEAR THE GDR ATTEMPT TO ESTABLISH A ZURICH SERVICE MAY PROVE TO BE A SOVIET-BACKED ATTEMPT TO SEEK A CHANGE IN THE CORRIDOR REGIME AS WELL AS A DIRECT REACTION TO THE BA/PA DECISION TO SEEK A ZURICH SERVICE WHICH SURFACED PUBLICLY IN SEPTEMBER. THIS, ADDRESSEES WILL RECALL, BROUGHT VEHEMENT SOVIET AND GDR REACTIONS, INCLUDING PRESSURE PLACED ON THE SWISS AND A RENEWAL OF THE OLD SOVIET CLAIM THAT ALL CIVIL FLIGHTS IN THE CORRIDORS ARE "ILLEGALZ (REF D AND PREVIOUS). SINCE THEN WE KNOW FROM BRITISH AND FRENCH MISSIONS HERE THAT

INTERFLUG HAS SOUGHT, SO FAR UNSUCCESSFULLY, AN ARRANGEMENT WITH BOTH BRITISH AIRWAYS AND AIR FRANCE FOR SCHEDULED SERVICES FROM SCHOENEFELD TO PARIS AND LONDON. INTERFLUG ALSO SOUGHT AN OFFICE IN THE WESTERN SECTORS OF BERLIN WHICH WE HAVE TURNED DOWN. TAKEN TOGETHER, THESE GDR ACTIONS SUGGEST A STRATEGY MAY HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED, THE LONG-TERM OBJECT OF WHICH WOULD PRESUMABLY BE TO UNRAVEL THE EXISTING AIR SITUATION.

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NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
CAB-02 COME-00 DOTE-00 EB-08 CIEP-00 FAA-00 ACDA-07
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5. AS REGARDS MERCY FLIGHTS, THE ALLIED MISSIONS HERE BELIEVE RECENT DEVELOPMENTS HAVE DIMINISHED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FRG MERCY FLIGHT PROPOSAL AS A QUID PRO QUO FOR INTERFLUG OVERFLIGHT RIGHTS. ON FEB. 10 A SERIOUSLY ILL BERLINER WAS FLOWN HOME FROM TEL AVIV BY LAKER AIRWAYS, A BRITISH CARRIER, USING THE CORRIDORS. THIS MERCY FLIGHT WAS ARRANGED BY THE DEUTSCHE RETTUNGSLUGWACHT, A STUTTGART ORGANIZATION WITH WHICH THE CAA'S ARE FAMILIAR, HAVING INTERCEDED VIGOROUSLY WITH FRG FOREIGN OFFICE TO PERSUADE DRW TO CONSIDER ALLIED CARRIERS FIRST IN CASES OF WEST BERLIN-BOUND MERCY FLIGHTS, RATHER THAN RESORT TO A NON-ALLIED CARRIER USING SCHOENEFELD. THE FRG PROPOSAL REGARDING MERCY FLIGHTS WOULD SEEM A STEP

BACKWARD FROM THE PRESENT ARRANGEMENT WHICH STRENGTHENS
THE CORRIDOR REGIME.

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6. WE ARE NOT HERE QUESTIONING THE VALUE OF NORTH-SOUTH
FLIGHTS BY NON-THREE POWER AIRLINES. THEY WOULD
STRENGTHEN TEGEL'S INTERNATIONAL STANDING, AND SUPP-
LEMENT THE EXISTING CORRIDORS. (IN FACT, THEY
WOULD BE A DILUTED FORM OF THE 1945 WESTERN PROPOSAL
FOR CORRIDORS TO PRAGUE, WARSAW, AND COPENHAGEN WHICH
THE SOVIETS NEVER ACCEPTED.) THEY WOULD ALSO BE
WARMLY RECEIVED BY BERLINERS.

7. BASICALLY, WE CONCERNED THAT A TRADE
OFF OF TEGEL-MOSCOW FOR LUFTHANSA AND SCHOENEFELD-
ZURICH FOR INTERFLUG, FINE IN ITSELF SAVE FOR
THE COMPETITION WITH PAN AM, WILL NOT STOP THERE.
IF THE GDR SURPRISES GEHLHOFF AND OURSELVES AND ACCEPTS
THE FRG DEAL, IT WILL DO SO PROBABLY BECAUSE IT HAS MORE
IN MIND THAN A SCHOENEFELD-ZURICH SERVICE. THE NEXT
GDR STEP WOULD BE ADDITIONAL SUCH OFFERS ALL DESIGNED
TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE FRG'S DESIRE TO BUILD AIR
LINKS TO BERLIN FOR ITS NATIONAL AIRLINE. ONCE A PATTERN
OF GDR-CONTROLLED, NON-CORRIDOR, COMMERCIAL
SERVICE BETWEEN FRG OR OTHER WESTERN POINTS TO BERLIN HAS
BEEN ESTABLISHED ON A PIECEMEAL BASIS, WE WOULD THEN
NOT BE SURPRISED TO SEE THE GDR (AND/OR SOVIETS) ASK WHETHER
THE TIME HAD NOT COME TO PUT AN END TO THE
CORRIDOR INFRINGEMENT ON GDR SOVEREIGNTY INASMUCH AS
EVERYTHING WEST BERLIN NEEDED WAS BEING PROVIDED ON THE
NORMAL BASIS OF STATE-TO-STATE RELATIONS.

8. OUR RECOMMENDATION IS THEREFORE THAT BONN GROUP
DISCUSS QUESTION IN SOME DEPTH TO INSURE THAT FRG HAS
THOUGHT THROUGH IMPLICATIONS OF ITS PROPOSAL. WE ALSO
RECOMMEND THAT BONN GROUP REVIEW BERLIN AIR REGIME AGAIN
SINCE 5 YEARS HAVE PASSED SINCE 1972 STUDY. IN OUR VIEW,
DELICATE FLOWER OF BERLIN AVIATION WOULD BE CRITICALLY
ENDANGERED IF ANY MAJOR ALLIED CARRIER STARTED A
REGULAR SERVICE BETWEEN WEST AND SCHOENEFELD OR IF
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PATTERN OF NON-CORRIDOR FLIGHTS FROM FRG TO TEGEL
DEVELOPED ON AD HOC BASIS. BOTH SUCH EVENTUALITIES MUST BE
RULED OUT AT OUTSET, NO MATTER HOW ENTICING THE ADDITIONAL

SERVICES MAY BE FOR LUFTHANSA, AIR FRANCE OR BA.
GEORGE

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Message Attributes

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